Meeting of the Indo-US Sub-Commision on Science and Technology

992. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of new areas of Joint Indo-US research identified at the 8th meeting of the Indo-US Sub-Commission on Science and Technology held in the last week of September, 1986;

(b) whether any scheme to transform research findings into improved technologies and to transfer these into productive uses in the economy have been initiated; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) The Indo-US scientific collaboration is an on-going inter active process between the scientists of the two countries. In this, the emphasis in a wide spectrum of disciplines comes in for a periodic review. Accordingly, the eighth meeting of the Indo-US Sub-commission on Science and Technology was held at Washington, D.C. on September 22—24, 1986, to further the collaboration in the following S&T fields:

(i) Physical and Material Sciences;

(ii) Earth, Atmospheric and Marine Sciences;

(iii) Energy;

(iv) Environment and Ecology;

(v) Information Science & Technology;

(vi) Health, Medical and Life Sciences.

It was also agreed that the popularization of science was an important area which should be given increased support and emphasis in cooperative activities under the Sub-commission. At the end of the two days meeting there was a total endorsement of the approach followed so far and to be followed in future.

(b) and (c) The bilateral cooperation under the auspices of Indo-US S&T Sub-Commission is primarily for basic and fundamental research in the above fields. However, it has been agreed to explore possibilities for cooperation leading to translation of research results into improved technologies and their productive uses in the economy.

Liberalisation of norms for opening post offices

993. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to liberalise the norms and procedure for opening of post offices in the far flung backward areas of the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) The norms adopted by the Department since 1978 for opening of post offices in backward and tribal areas in fact contain substantial relaxation in respect of requirements of minimum population and minimum revenue. The Department is at present taking a fresh look at the norms for opening of post offices taking into account the recommendations of the Committee of Enquiry into the Extra Departmental System, the extent of postal development that has taken place in different areas and other relevant factors. However, in so far as tribal and backward areas are concerned they will continue to be entitled to special consideration. It is however posible that even the related norms may be found to be inadequate in some areas which are characterised by extreme sparseness of population or remoteness. In